

MINUTES  
LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL  
NOVEMBER 25, 2014

Members Present- Chairman Jim Coleman, Vice Chairman Edward McDaniel, and Council Members Diane Anderson, Ted Nash, David Pitts and Joe Wood

Member Absent: Keith Tollison (due to business)

Staff Present- County Attorney Sandy Cruickshanks; Director of Public Works Scott Holland; Human Resources Director Debi Parker; Director of Fire Services Greg Lindley; and County Administrator Ernie Segars

Press Present: Cory Engle of the Laurens County Advertiser; Vic McDonald of the Clinton Chronicle; Iva Cadmus of WLBG Radio; and Daniel Taylor of GoLaurens

Chairman Jim Coleman called the November 25, 2014 session of Laurens County Council to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Historic Court House in Laurens.

Councilman Wood delivered the Invocation and all participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Approval of the Agenda for the November 25, 2014 Meeting of Council- Council Member Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda and Councilman Nash offered a second to the motion. Prior to the vote, Administrator Segars noted that "Project Lambeau" is spelled incorrectly on the Agenda. With that correction noted, Council approved the agenda on a vote of 6-0.

Approval of Minutes for the November 11, 2014 meeting of Council- On a motion by Councilman Nash and a second by Councilman Pitts, Council approved the Minutes on a vote of 6-0.

Public Hearing, Laurens County Ordinance No. 775, which is, "An Ordinance of Laurens County, South Carolina ( The "County") Authorizing the Amendment of the County's Original Principal Amount \$300,000 Taxable Special Source Revenue Bond Now Outstanding in the Amount of \$3,059,731.39"

Chairman Coleman opened the Public Hearing on the referenced ordinance. No one wished to address Council and Chairman Coleman closed the Public Hearing.

Third Reading Approval, Laurens County Ordinance No. 775- Council Member Anderson made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 775 on third and final reading. Councilman Pitts offered a second to the motion and Council approved the motion on a vote of 6-0.

Public Hearing, Laurens County Ordinance No. 778, which is, " An Ordinance Authorizing an Amendment to the Fee-in-Lieu –of –Tax Agreement and Infrastructure Financing Agreement By and Between Anderson Hardwood Floors, LLC and Laurens County, South Carolina, Providing for an Additional or Sponsor Affiliate and Other Matters Relating Thereto."

Chairman Coleman convened the Public Hearing on the referenced Ordinance. No one wished to address Council on the Ordinance and Council closed the Public Hearing

Third Reading Approval, Laurens County Ordinance No. 778- Councilman Pitts made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 778 on third and final reading. Council Member Anderson offered a second to the motion and Council approved the motion on a vote of 6-0.

#### DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 1.) Second Reading Approval, Laurens County Ordinance No. 779, which is " An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of One or More Incentive Agreements By and Among Laurens County , South Carolina and a Company Known to the County as Project Lambeau, and One or More Existing or To-Be-Formed Subsidiaries, Or Affiliated or Related Entities, as Sponsor, to Provide for a Fee-in-Lieu of Ad Valorem Taxes Incentive ; To Provide for the Inclusion of the Project in a Multi-County Business or Industrial Park; to Provide for Special Revenue Credits; and Other Matters Related Thereto.

Council Member Anderson made a motion to approve the referenced Ordinance on Second Reading. Councilman Pitts offered a second to motion and Council approved Ordinance No. 779 on second reading on a vote of 6-0.

Chairman Coleman said that "Project Lambeau" is a new industry that will locate in the Owings II Industrial Park near Gray Court.

- 2.) Approval of a "Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing on the Question of the Creation of the Laurens County Fire District in Laurens County, South Carolina, the Abolition of Existing Fire Districts and Other Matters Related Thereto."

Prior to discussion of the referenced Resolution, Administrator offered the following clarification on actions previously taken by County Council related to the Special Tax District(s) established for Fire Suppression Services and pending discussion , and possible approval, of a General Obligation Bond to finance capital improvements for the county's Fire System.

On November 11, 2014, Laurens County Council gave first reading approval to Ordinance 780, which will unify all unincorporated areas of the county, and the areas within the unincorporated municipalities of Cross Hill, Gray Court and Cross Hill, into a unified Special Tax District to finance the county Fire System. Council took this action upon the advice of Bond Counsel Theodore DuBose and County Attorney Sandy Cruickshanks.



A statute of the State of South Carolina requires that a locality hold a public hearing on such an Ordinance prior to final approval on Third Reading. Notification of that Public Hearing must be advertised in the local press for three consecutive weeks prior to the Public Hearing. Staff will publish the notice the required number of times (3) in the coming weeks and County Council can approve Ordinance 780 on third reading on January 13, 2015.

At that point, Laurens County will have one, unified Special Purpose District for Fire Suppression Services and the county will then be in a position to begin readings of a General Obligation Bond Ordinance to finance the capital improvements to the Fire System previously discussed.

Also on November 11, 2014, Council approved on a 4-3 vote a motion to approve a \$2.4 million General Obligation Bond, with a 10-year pay-back, to finance the structural improvements to existing stations and to construct new stations as recommended in a Capital Improvements review completed by staff. Approval of this motion represents a "sense of Council "and did NOT authorize the issuance of a General Obligation bond to fund improvements. Council cannot undertake any funding plan until Ordinance 780 is in place.

Prior to the vote on the Resolution, Councilman Wood questioned the timing of the vote because of a Certification that was presented as part of the Resolution documentation. That document requires the signature and the application of the County Seal by Clerk to Council Betty C. Walsh. Councilman Wood pointed out that Mrs. Walsh was not present at the November 25, 2014 Council meeting, due to a recent death in her family.

Attorney Cruickshanks said that the Clerk of Council does not have to attend the meeting or witness the actual approval of the Resolution, as long as there is verification that Council took action on a certain day.

On a motion by Council Member Anderson and a second by Councilman Pitts, Council approved the Resolution on a vote of 5-1. Councilman Woods voted in opposition.

Reappointment of Three Members to the Laurens County Library Board- On a motion by Councilman Nash and a second by Council Member Anderson, Council agreed on a vote Of 6-0 to reappoint the following members to two-year terms on the Library Board:

a.) Dr. John W. Womack  
541 West Main St.  
Laurens, SC 29360

c.) Mrs. Rose A. Blackstone  
1945 Mount Carmel Road  
Gray Court, SC 29645

b.) Ms. Velma M. Austin  
104 Mason Street  
Clinton, SC 29325

MINUTES/ LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL  
NOVEMBER 25, 2014/ PAGE 4

Meeting Schedule for December, 2014- Council agreed by consensus to follow a schedule of meeting only once during the month of December. That meeting will be held on December 9, 2014'

Administrator's Briefing- Administrator Segars said that he had attended a Public Hearing conducted in Columbia by the (SC State) House Transportation, Infrastructure and Management Ad Hoc Committee. The Committee meeting was held on November 18, 2014. At that Public Hearing, the Committee heard reports from county representatives (from Spartanburg and Beaufort) on the financial inability of counties to assume ownership and maintenance of state roads. The SC Department of Transportation estimates that the total cost of needed road and bridge upgrades in the State of South Carolina total \$45 billion. Laurens County has at least 1,000 miles of state-owned highways, plus 800 miles of county roads already maintained by the County Department of public Works.

Administrator Segars said that Laurens County lacks the financial resources and staff to assume the maintenance of even a portion of state-owned roads within the county. He urged Council members to be aware of this issue as the SC General Assembly convenes in January, 2015.

Chairman Coleman said that he shares those concerns and he is also concerned about full funding for the Local Government Fund by the General Assembly.

Period for Public Comment- Chairman Coleman opened a 15-minute period for public comment.

Laurens County resident Ken Couser said that, on Sunday, November 23, 2014, he received a report that a rental unit owned by Mr. Couser was on fire in the Poplar Springs area of the county. Mr. Couser said that he went to the location of the dwelling fire during a heavy rain.

Upon arrival at the location, Mr. Couser that he observed Laurens County firemen responding to the call, with a number of fire trucks at the scene. He pointed out that most of the firemen were volunteers and Laurens County Fire Director Greg Lindley was also on the scene. Mr. Couser commended all of the firemen for their professionalism in the response.

The dwelling was virtually a total loss and the family residing there lost almost everything. Mr. Couser said that the firemen approached the family to see what they could do to assist. He said that the firemen were requesting such information as the sizes of children's clothes in an effort to collect items to sustain the family during a very difficult time. He also said that Fire Director Lindley had contacted the American Red Cross for assistance to the family.

In summation, Mr. Couser said that Laurens County and its citizens are most fortunate to have a professional and caring Fire Service to respond to emergencies. He also complimented Director Lindley for the level and quality of training made available to those involved in the Laurens County Fire Service.

Chairman Coleman thanked Mr. Couser for his comments. He said that Council is grateful for the Fire Service and all county employees who serve.

Councilman Wood also thanked Mr. Couser for his comments. He said that the Western Laurens Fire Department responded to the fire emergency in the Poplar Springs area and the Western Laurens Department has provided excellent service to its service area for many years.

Councilman Wood also said that he had spoken recently with a member of the Laurens County Legislative Delegation about the Local Government Fund. He said that the Legislator did not seem that concerned about providing full funding for the Local Government Fund, which is a major component of funding to local governments in South Carolina.

Council members wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ernest B. Segars", written in a cursive style.

Ernest B. Segars  
Laurens County Administrator